

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Mall and Memorial Parks
Washington, D.C.



Photographs of Existing Conditions Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site

2006–2011

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Photographs are courtesy of the National Park Service (Office of Public Affairs, Carol Highsmith, Eliza Voigt, and Deryn Goodwin) and Greg Sorensen, URS Group, Inc.

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE



Pennsylvania Avenue — looking toward the U.S. Capitol from Freedom Plaza (top) and the Old Post Office Tower (left), and an aerial view showing the avenue west of 7th Street.

As America's main street, Pennsylvania Avenue is nationally and internationally recognized as the location for Inaugural Parades, state funerals, First Amendment marches, and national celebrations.



The 2009 Presidential Inaugural Parade.



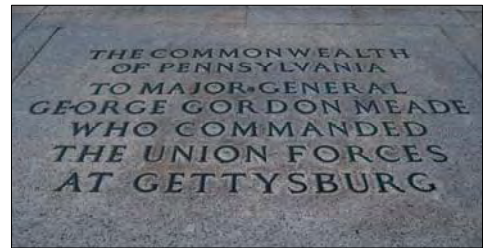
A First Amendment demonstration (left); flags and a motorcade during the state visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao in January 2011 (above).

GENERAL GEORGE MEADE MEMORIAL



The George Meade Memorial is on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, in front of the U.S. District Court Building.

The inscription in front of the memorial is easy to read.



The statue is in good overall condition. Some repairs have been made.



The pedestal shows signs of staining and deterioration. Skateboarding damage occurs on stairs, walls, and the base of the statue.



The triangle in the middle of the Pennsylvania Avenue / Constitution Avenue / 3rd Street intersection has been identified as a site for a future national memorial. Safe pedestrian movements in the area are a concern.

JOHN MARSHALL PARK



John Marshall Park is a multi-level area with a statue at its north end commemorating the longest serving Chief Justice of the United States — from 1801 to 1835. The park was completed by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation in 1983.



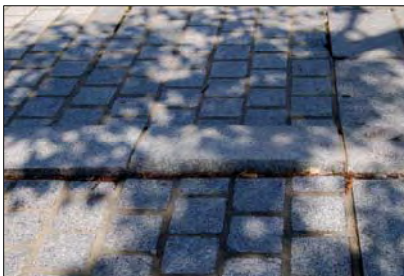
Large plazas, fountains, and sculpture create pleasant spaces to sit, relax, and perhaps play chess.



The bronze sculpture of two men playing chess is by Lloyd Lillie.



The plaza area just north of Pennsylvania Avenue is used as staging for some special events, including Inaugural Parades. The area is not well visited by the general public, but it is used by homeless individuals.



The park and its furnishings have deteriorated. Proposed rehabilitation offers opportunities to improve the park and provide additional education about the judiciary.

THE MELLON FOUNTAIN

The Mellon Fountain is a small commemorative fountain at the intersection of 6th Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, and Constitution Avenue. It honors Andrew Mellon, whose gifts led to the establishment of the National Gallery of Art.



The fountain needs to be repaired and regularly maintained. Adjacent walks are paved with bricks, and curvilinear granite curbs surround street tree plantings.

A triangular planting area, designed by I. M. Pei, is southeast of the Mellon Fountain, adjacent to the National Gallery of Art. The Constitution Avenue side of the triangle has been damaged by traffic accidents.



Skateboarding on top of the planter walls has also damaged the stonework.



INDIANA PLAZA

GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC MEMORIAL



Indiana Plaza, east of 7th Street and south of Indiana Avenue, is the site of the Grand Army of the Republic Memorial and the Temperance Fountain, as well as historic buildings.

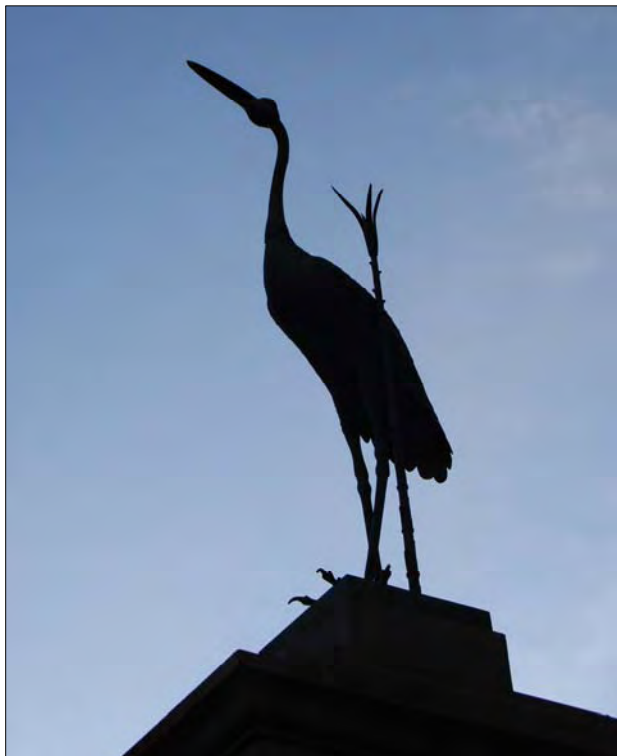


The plaza has an unkempt appearance, some adjacent lighting does not function, and skateboard damage is evident on walls and commemorative features.

TEMPERANCE FOUNTAIN



The Temperance Fountain no longer has running water because the waterline has been sealed and the trough has been removed. It is in fair structural condition.



Litter collects beneath the grate around the base of the fountain.

U.S. NAVY MEMORIAL



The U.S. Navy Memorial is at 8th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. It has a large plaza with a map of the world, flagpoles, water features, sculptural reliefs, and the *Lone Sailor* statue. The memorial plaza is used for concerts and programs by the adjacent Naval Heritage Center. The fountains mask traffic noise.



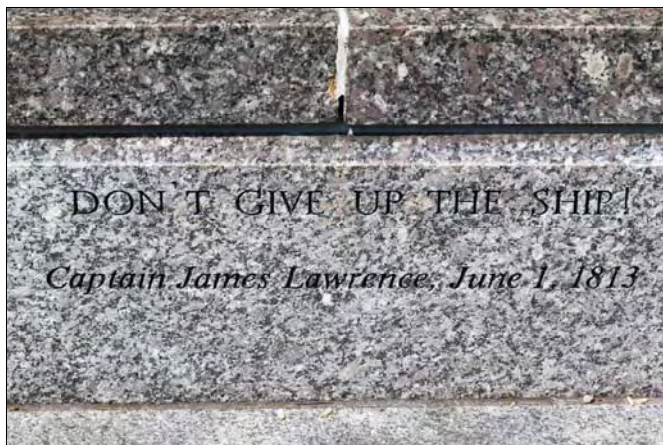


Bronze plaques commemorate important events in the history of the U.S. Navy.





There are adjacent outdoor food service areas. The small lawn at the north end of the plaza is used by neighbors as a pet-relief area.



Painted, incised lettering on a vertical surface is easier to read than larger lettering in the pavement where the inpainting has worn away.



Custom designed features at the memorial, such as these step lights, contribute to its uniqueness. However, it is difficult to stock and repair such features.



GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT HANCOCK STATUE



Just to the east of the Navy Memorial are the General Winfield Scott Hancock statue and the Archives-Navy Memorial-Penn Quarter Metro station. The statue is surrounded by trees and is not readily visible from Pennsylvania Avenue during the summer.



A social trail cuts across the grass north of the statue, heading toward the Navy Memorial. The drinking fountain was designed by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. Maintenance and sanitation are continuing challenges.



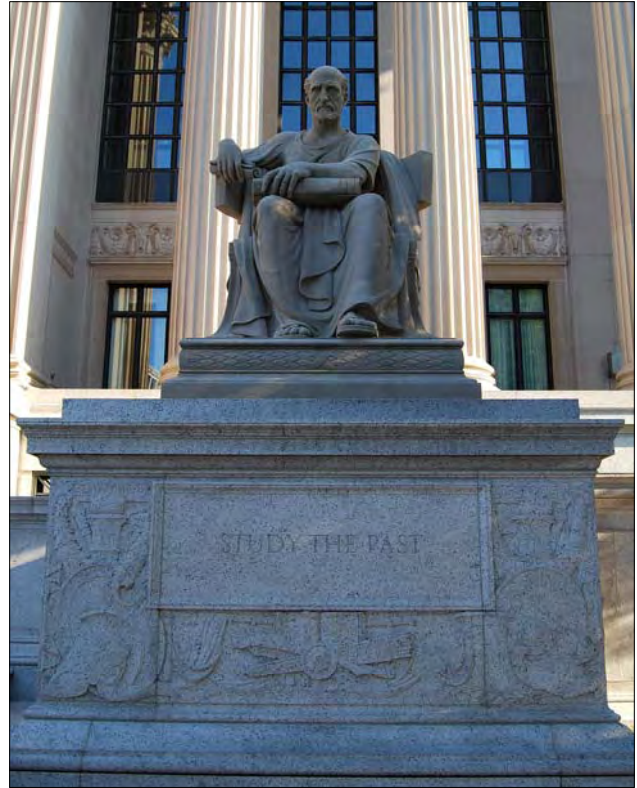
NATIONAL ARCHIVES PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE FRONTAGE



The north facade of the National Archives includes the research entry. The building is the terminus of views from Indiana Avenue, which is a tenet of the L'Enfant plan. Trees in front of the building have not been replanted.



Detail of the pediment.



Sculptures by Robert Aitken flank the north entrance to the building. The figure to the left represents the past ("What is Past is Prologue"), and the figure to the right, the future ("Study the Past").

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL STONE



The National Park Service manages the FDR Memorial Stone, which is on the northwest grounds of the National Archives.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PLAZA



The Benjamin Franklin Plaza is on the southeast corner of 12th and Pennsylvania Avenue, in front of the Old Post Office Building. At midday in summer the lack of shade in the plaza can be a problem for visitors.



FREEDOM PLAZA



Freedom Plaza is an urban paved landscape designed to accommodate demonstrations and special events and to commemorate the L'Enfant plan, which is illustrated with a map of the city in the paving, along with quotations about the nation's capital. Freedom Plaza has been designated by the National Capital Planning Commission as a future site for a nationally significant memorial.

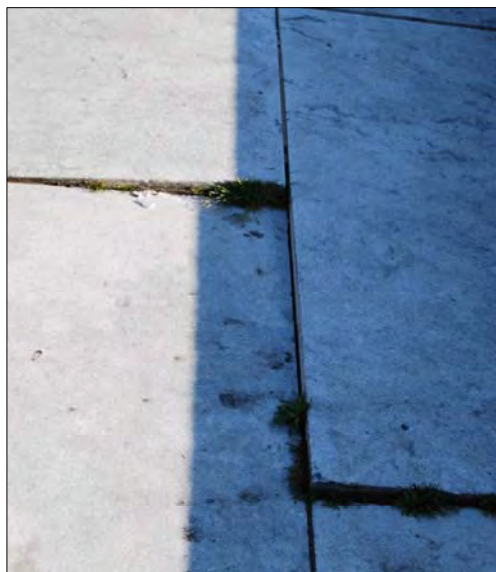


The fountain at 14th Street is difficult to operate. Frequent skateboarding has damaged the walls and steps.

Glare and heat contribute to user discomfort during summer.



Freedom Plaza seen from 13th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.



Paving is uneven and shows damage from skateboarding.

CASIMIR PULASKI STATUE



A statue of Revolutionary War hero Casimir Pulaski is in the northeast corner of the plaza and is surrounded by seating areas and a rose garden.



Due to skateboard damage, some benches around the Pulaski statue are missing slats or backs, or entire benches may be gone. Tree grates have been partially removed when outgrown.

PERSHING PARK



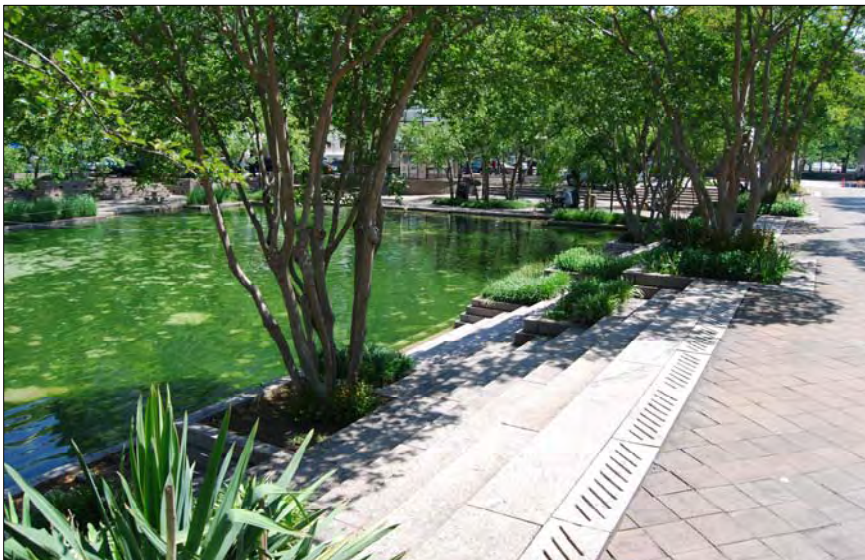
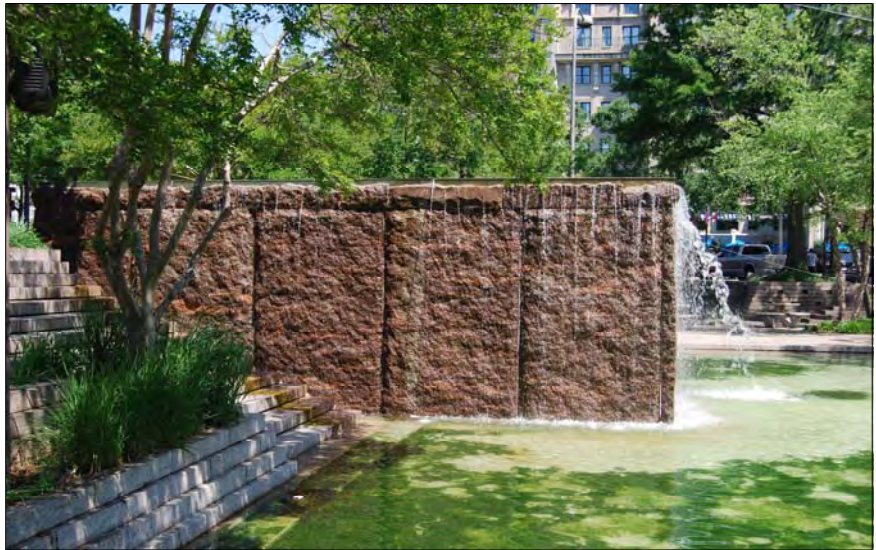
Pershing Park, designed as an urban oasis and a World War I memorial, honors General John J. Pershing. The park has a waterfall and pool. In the past the pool was used for ice skating in winter. Underground restrooms are accessible by means of an elevator in the glass house (bottom left).





Some park furnishings, such as concrete tables, are not compatible with the character of other Pennsylvania Avenue street furnishings.

Water quality in the pool has been an ongoing problem.



Granite pavers, which are able to withstand heavy use, were used in construction.



Some lampposts are out of alignment. Low places collect water, making tables unusable. Skateboarding has damaged granite curbing (above).



ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

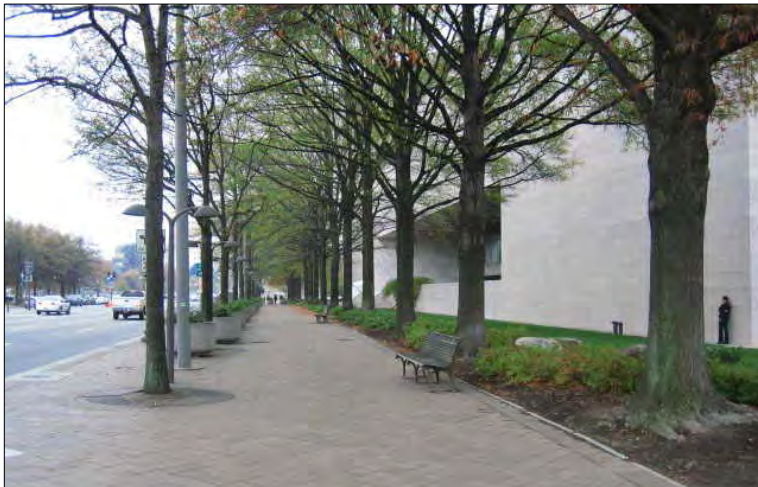


The buildings along both sides of Pennsylvania Avenue contribute to its character. This section focuses on those buildings that visitors see as they move along the avenue and visit specific memorials. The U.S. District Court Building (left) is the backdrop for the General Meade Memorial.

The Canadian Embassy is west of John Marshall Park.



A sculpture by Bill Reid, *The Spirit of Haida Gwaii*, is the focal point of an embassy courtyard that faces John Marshall Park.



The National Gallery of Art East Building is on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, across from the Meade Memorial. The sidewalk along Pennsylvania Avenue is tree lined, with benches at wide intervals. Frank Stella's sculpture, *Prince Friedrich von Homburg, Ein Schauspiel*, graces the east lawn of the building on 3rd Street.

The National Gallery of Art West Building is across from the Mellon Fountain, John Marshall Park, and the Canadian Embassy.





Looking west along Pennsylvania Avenue from 4th Street. The Mellon Fountain and the Federal Trade Commission building are on the left, and the Canadian Embassy and the Newseum on the right. Note the wide two-way bicycle lane in the center of the avenue.



The Newseum, the newest building on Pennsylvania Avenue, is across from the Mellon Fountain. The First Amendment is inscribed on the building's façade.



Buildings in the Federal Triangle south of Pennsylvania Avenue are of a monumental scale. The Federal Trade Commission, which is west of the Mellon Fountain, is representative of this grand style.



A detail of the bas-relief above the door of the building on Pennsylvania Avenue is shown on the left.

Indiana Plaza is on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, across from the Federal Trade Commission. This view looks north along 7th Street. The plaza originally formed the eastern boundary of Market Square.





The Firemen's Insurance Company Building is north of Indiana Avenue, across from the Temperance Fountain; it is listed on the Historic American Buildings Survey.



The Metro station / bus stop is adjacent to the plaza.



The National Bank of Washington, the city's oldest bank, is at 301 7th Street and is also listed on the Historical American Buildings Survey. The bronze doors (left) are not historic.



This aerial view looking west from about 7th Street shows the Federal Triangle, lying between Pennsylvania and Constitution avenues. On the south side of the avenue are the National Archives, the Department of Justice, the Old Post Office Tower, and the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. On the north side are the U.S. Navy Memorial, the FBI Building, and Freedom Plaza (center upper right).



The FBI Building was the first building constructed after the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation was created. Part of the negotiation for the building's construction was a wide sidewalk along Pennsylvania Avenue.



The Department of Justice is across from the FBI Building.

Many of the buildings in the Federal Triangle are inscribed with quotations. The quotation above the main door of Justice (below) reads, "Justice in the life and conduct of the state is possible only as first it resides in the hearts and souls of its citizens."

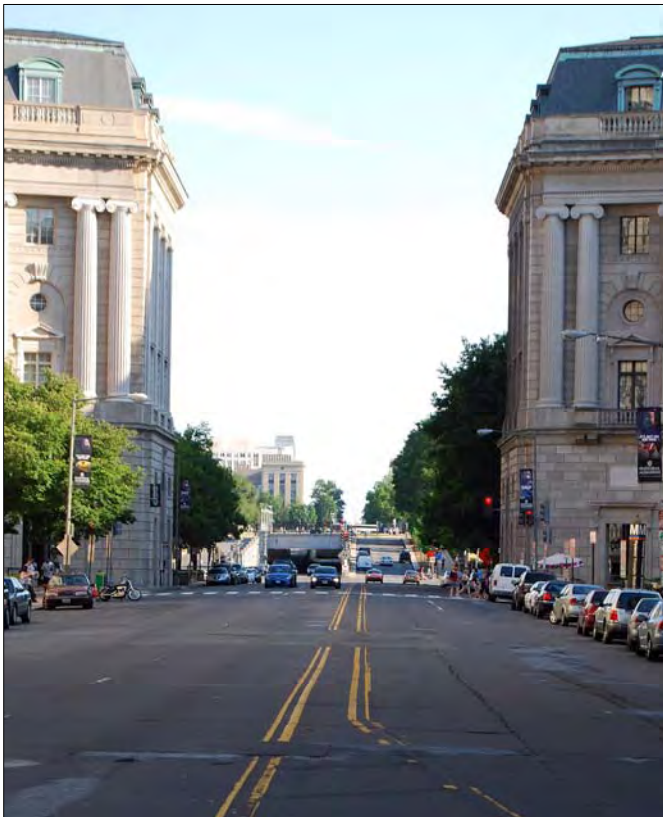


Planters are used as security barriers.



One of the special views along Pennsylvania Avenue is of the National Museum of Natural History, which is adjacent to the National Mall. It is visible along the 10th Street corridor, between the Department of Justice and the Internal Revenue Service. This view corridor dates from the L'Enfant plan.

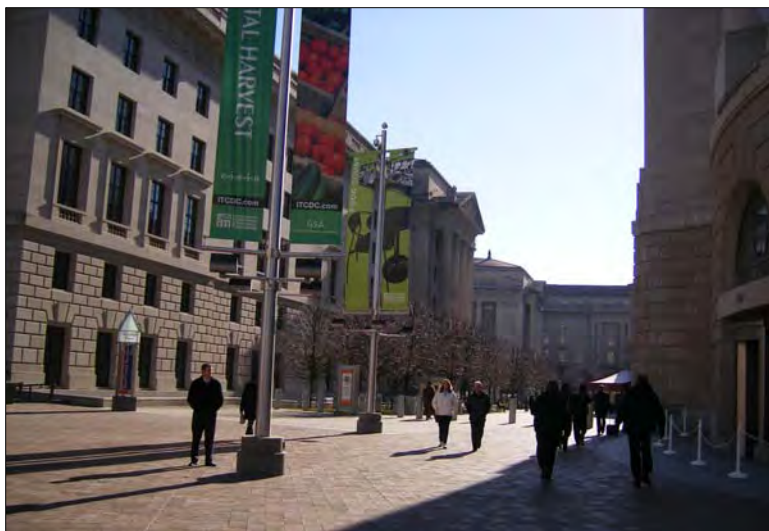
The Old Post Office Building is at 12th and Pennsylvania Avenue, east of the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center.



The south view at 12th Street (between the Internal Revenue Service and the Ariel Rios Federal Building) is of the tunnel portal.



The Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center maintains the monumental scale of buildings in the Federal Triangle.



The Reagan Building's pedestrian plaza continues the paving pattern used along Pennsylvania Avenue. Banners add visual interest.



The John A. Wilson Building at 1350 Pennsylvania was originally named the District Building and was renamed to commemorate the former chair of the D.C. Council. It houses D.C. government offices. The Department of Commerce Building can be seen at the right side of the picture.



South of Pershing Park is the Department of Commerce Building on Pennsylvania Avenue South. The Malcolm Baldrige Hall in the building is used as the White House Visitor Center.



North of Pershing Park is the Willard Hotel, a D.C. landmark. From spring through fall the sidewalk is used for an outdoor café.

STREET FURNISHINGS

BENCHES AND SEATING



The Pennsylvania Avenue double wood bench dates from the PADC era. The benches are not universally accessible. Businesses sometimes add unauthorized embellishments.



Other wood bench types include the single wood slat bench in the same design as the double bench (above) and a painted wood bench (above right) that is used near the Pulaski statue area. They are either set in rows or around trees (right).





Wire mesh benches were designed for Pershing Park and maintain open views. Mesh benches are also used at John Marshall Park.



Circular benches around trees are used at Franklin Plaza and in front of the FBI Building; however, improperly maintained tree grates create tripping hazards.



Granite benches are used at Pershing Park (below left) and the U.S. Navy Memorial (below right).



Concrete benches (below) are also used at John Marshall Park. Low stone walls also provide seating.

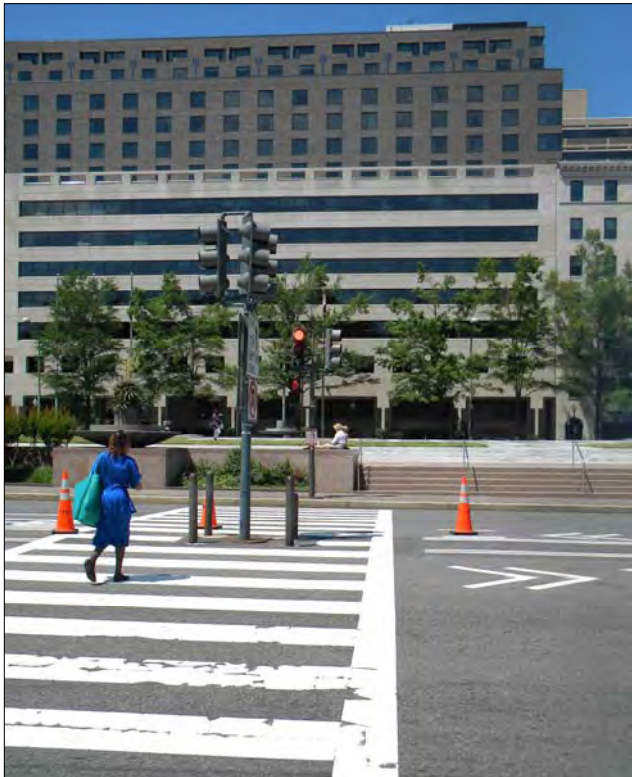


BOLLARDS



Three different styles of bollards are used at Indiana Plaza. Bollards are generally not used at other locations.

CROSSWALKS



Pedestrians must cross bike and traffic lanes and may need to wait on islands in the middle of the avenue before they can finish crossing.



The crosswalk at 3rd and Pennsylvania Avenue is paved with brick to indicate the pedestrian right-of-way.

DRINKING FOUNTAINS

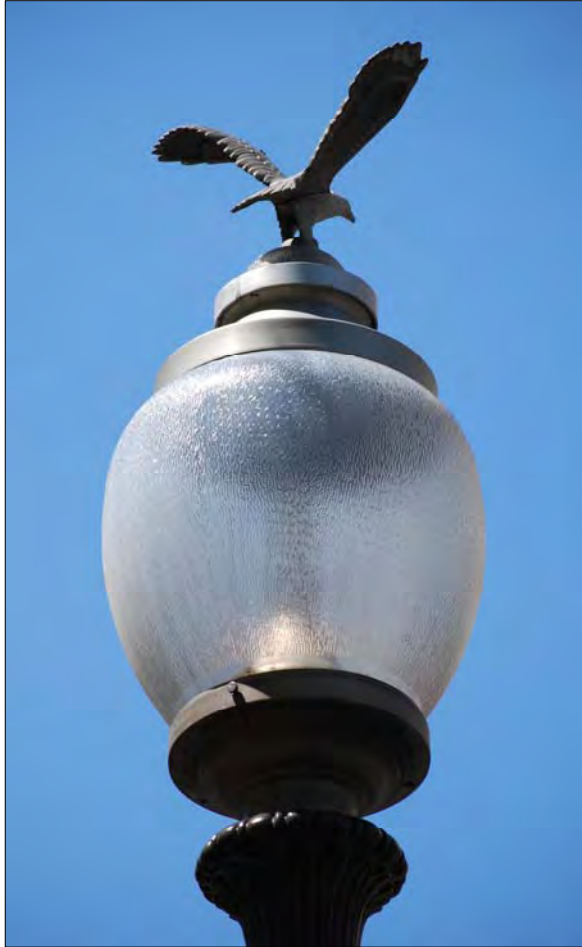


Various styles of drinking fountains provided along Pennsylvania Avenue.

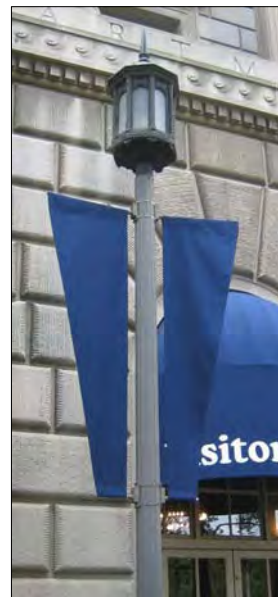
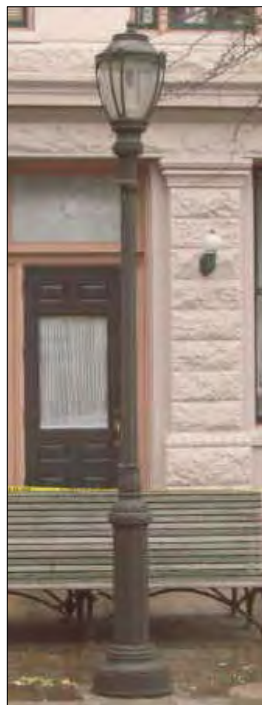


Maintenance is an ongoing problem. The photo to the left shows a covered, nonworking fountain that is being used as a trash container.

LIGHTING



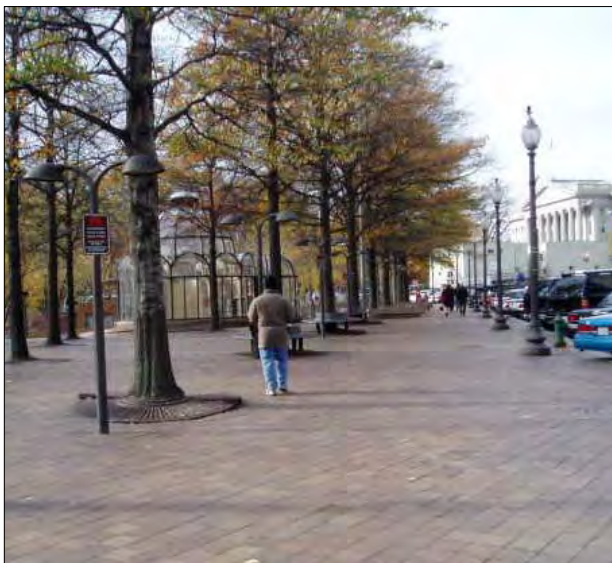
Washington Eagle lights flank Pennsylvania Avenue on both sides, emphasizing the avenue's significance. This is the only place in the District where these lights are used. Flags are attached for special occasions, such as the state visit by the President of Mexico.



The Twin Twenty light (far left) is used along Constitution Avenue. Lights at Indiana Plaza (center photos) and the White House Visitor Center (above right) have historic references.



The PADC-designed twin globe lights (left) are used for pedestrian lighting along the avenue, and are setback from the Washington Eagle lights, which are immediately adjacent to the avenue.



Special lighting has been designed for specific sites, such as at Marshall Park (right). Incandescent bulbs are gradually being replaced with energy-efficient fluorescent bulbs. Above is a pedestrian light across from the Willard Hotel.



Parts for custom-designed lights at the U.S. Navy Memorial are expensive and difficult to stock.



High, thin street lights illuminate the road right-of-way.

PLANTERS



A variety of concrete planters are used along Pennsylvania Avenue, both as decorative highlights and as security barriers.





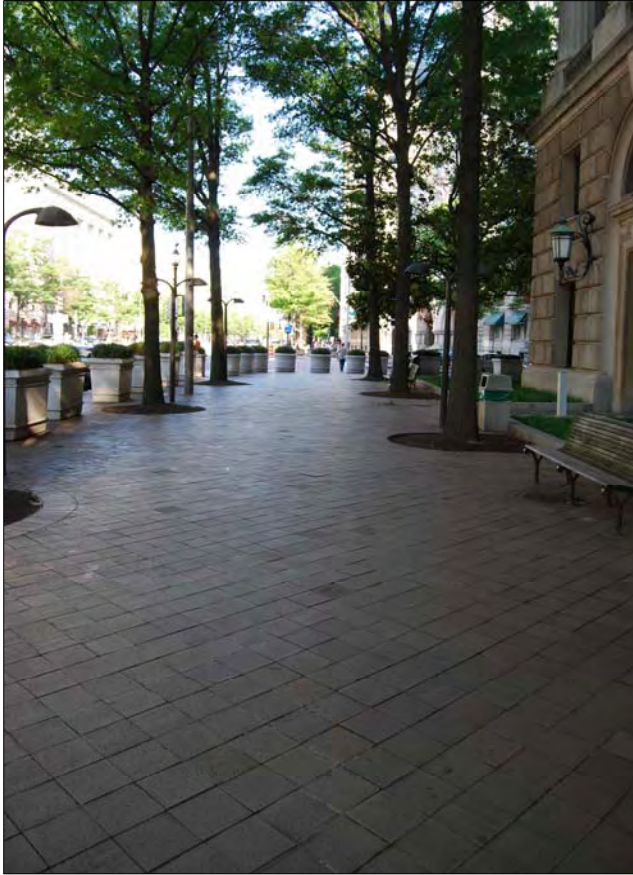
Planters without plants detract from the character of the avenue.



Sidewalk cafés typically use umbrellas, fencing, planters, and stanchions to define the commercial space.



SIDEWALKS AND PAVING



Concrete pavers are used along most of Pennsylvania Avenue's sidewalks. Missing pavers and chipped or uneven pavers result in tripping hazards.



The sidewalks are wide enough in some areas to accommodate outdoor restaurants, such as these outside the Occidental Restaurant and the Willard Hotel across from Pershing Park.



Paving in Franklin Plaza in front of the Old Post Office combines red brick and granite pavers in a curvilinear design.

Different paving patterns are used at individual sites. Granite pavers are used at John Marshall Park (left), but the surface is uneven in places.



A granite paver in Freedom Plaza (above) is cracked. Paving at Indiana Plaza (right) combines brick and granite in a stacked bond pattern.

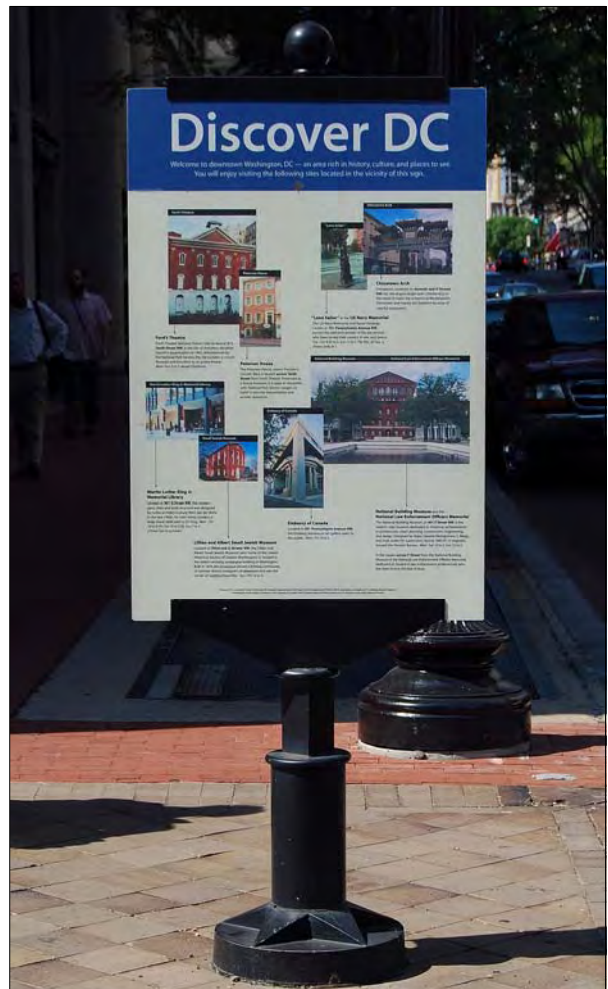


Granite curbs at John Marshall Park (left) guide pedestrian use and protect turf areas.

SIGNS



The city has begun installing distinctive wayfinding signs.



The Discover DC signs use the same post style.



Signs for the Downtown Heritage Trail also use the DC sign style, bringing continuity to the wayfinding system.



The NPS sign at John Marshall Park (left) has been defaced and the upper sign is illegible. The sign above is at the adjacent DC Courts building.

TRASH CONTAINERS



Trash containers were designed by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. Routine maintenance, along with regular emptying, is needed.



Trash containers at Freedom Plaza (above left) reflect a custom design. The tulip design (above right) is frequently used when PADC containers are replaced.



In addition to the PADC and custom containers, other styles are also used.

TREE GRATES



Tree grates designed by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation are marked with the PADC logo. The design allows the inner rings to be removed as the tree grows.



In some cases the inner rings of the grate were not cut away before the tree grew into them.



Tree grates at the U.S. Navy Memorial have a square design.

OTHER FEATURES

An authorized concession cart is across from Pershing Park, at 14th and Pennsylvania Avenue.



Various styles of newspaper boxes and a refreshment stand are on the north side of Indiana Plaza. They sometimes are placed outside of designated locations.



Commercial signs are placed temporarily along the sidewalks.

